

FLAAR

REPORTS

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El Hotel Tz'alamhá

Field Report

CAMILA MORALES

Welcome to Tz'alamhá'

Photos: Camila Morales

As part of our fieldwork in Baja Verapaz, we went to Chilasco, a small village in the mountains, home of one of the highest waterfalls in Central America, and also a traditional form of basket making.

A few kilometers away is Salama, the capital of Baja Verapaz. We stayed at Hotel Tz'alamhá'; none of us have stayed there before, however, the good impression it gave us was the incentive for this report.

The architecture of the hotel resembles a colonial style, the decoration is full of color and crafts.

There are nice gardens all over the hotel. From the second floor the view of the mountains surrounding the town is beautiful.

Being vegetarian is sometimes complicated while traveling, but the chef was very helpful and made me special dishes that were really delicious. In general the food was fresh and luscious. Our waitress Jaqueline learned about our tight agenda and attended us at the garden where we were photo shooting various plants for our ethno-botany projects. She is a very kind and pleasant person and did her best in making us feel comfortable.



The restaurant, kitchen and the main events room surround the plaza in the picture on the top, a second level in this area is in process of construction. On the left, is the main garden surrounded by the bedrooms. On the right, part of Tz'alamhá's staff, starting with Jaqueline on the left, they are a very committed team to quality service. Since the moment we arrived at the hotel in the reception to the restaurant and room services, we were always very well attended. We stayed only one night, it was very peaceful and resting.



Photo: Camila Morales

Internet wireless is available in most of the social areas and bedrooms; there is also a computer near the lobby with free internet for the guests.

Salama is about two hours and a half driving from Guatemala City. It is located in a farming area with colonial buildings and a warm fresh weather. The hotel Tz'alamha is before the town's entrance, turning south from the main highway.

Pictured above is the main entrance and the lobby where there is a souvenirs shop with traditional crafts made of clay and wood.



Photo: Camila Morales



Photo: Nicholas Hellmuth

An afternoon of findings

Walking around, Dr. Nicholas Hellmuth fortunately found two varieties of avocado trees, which being a Mesoamerican plant are in our main list of interest, so after settling in our rooms, we took out the equipment and started taking pictures and video, using the strong mid afternoon light. Although the avocados are not an easy subject to light, we had a recent experience working with Hass avocados in Parramos, a farm near Antigua Guatemala. (Link Hass Avocado Farm Report).



Various types of trees and flowers grow everywhere in the hotel which attract different types of insects and birds. There is a beautiful garden where we found both avocado trees and many more interesting plants.

Also, we found *Spathiphyllum blandum* (pictured on the right), a flowering plant in the family Araceae which was originated in tropical regions of the Americas and southeastern Asia. As it appears in Maya art, its use and cosmological importance are of our concern.



Photos: Camila Morales



Above, Gustavo Gallegos doing macro photography in the hotel's garden.



Photos: Camila Morales





Fieldwork with FLAAR

Although we were in the middle of the winter in Guatemala, la Canicula: one or two weeks of sun between the storms, fortunately accompanied us throughout the trip.

The morning was sunny, the blue sky made a perfect balance with the buildings and with fresh batteries we were beginning our trip to our next destination: Rabinal.

At FLAAR we travel to places that can give us information about the pre Columbian societies that inhabited the ancestral Maya territory in Guatemala.

Rabinal is an Achi speaking town, a Maya derived language, the type of places we are looking for to document. After having a delicious breakfast at the hotel, we had an invitation to document the work of an Achi artisan, who carves the fruits of the calabash trees, and paints them with natural ingredients, all made and grown at her home.

For anyone interested in the Maya culture present today, we are happy to recommend the best places we visit for our researches. As the very enjoyable Tz'alamha Hotel in the Guatemalan highlands.

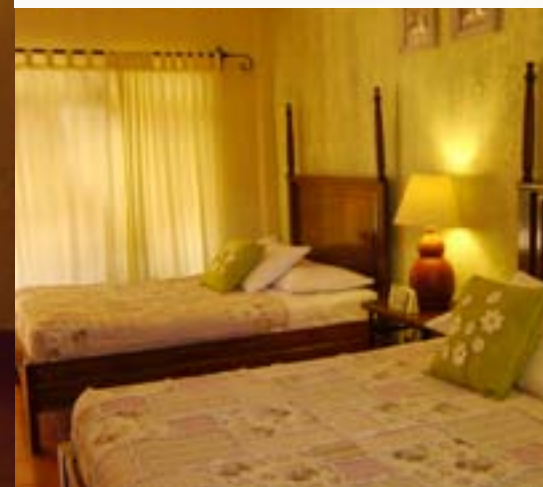


Events rooms

The restaurant and the main events salon are open and fresh. We enjoyed our dinner and breakfast here, the food is delicious and includes national and international cuisine options.

Most of the visitors of the hotel are business people, so it is more visited on week days, however, the hotel opens its doors for any type of traveler that enjoys commodity and professional service.





Bed rooms

The rooms are very spaced, clean and comfortable, they are well illuminated, have AC service, fan, TV and hot water.

In the morning, the sunrise lights the west side of the plaza, giving a warm wake up to the guests.



Contact Information

www.hoteltzalamha.com

tzalamha@hoteltzalamha.com

Phone numbers: (502) 79400338.

FAX. (502) 78230603

Salama, Baja Verapaz, Guatemala